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ABSTRACT

In an effort to determine whether OR 100, a college success orientation seminar offered at New Jersey's Cumberland County College (CCC), should be upgraded to a college-level course and whether OR 101, a one-unit orientation course, should be required of all students, CCC surveyed 288 two- and four-year institutions in New Jersey, Delaware, and Pennsylvania regarding courses accepted as transfer credits and current offerings. Completed questionnaires were received from 86 institutions, 21 of which were two-year colleges and 56 of which were private institutions. Study results included the following: (1) 60% of the responding institutions indicated that they would not accept OR 100 in transfer, compared to 33% that would; (2) CCC orientation courses were considered transferable at approximately the same rate by two- and four-year colleges; (3) 37% of the institutions indicated that a freshman seminar or equivalent orientation was a requirement; and (4) similar to CCC practice, this course was offered by the student services department at 26% of the reporting institutions, while 76% of the time the course was offered for credit. (KP)

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Cumberland County College Orientation Course Survey

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JC 940 668

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CUMBERLAND COUNTY COLLEGE
Orientation Course Survey
Office of Advisement
November, 1994

Introduction

In the Spring 1994, the Curriculum Committee recommended that certain information be gathered concerning our orientation course offerings. For a number of years, issues surrounding campus orientation courses have been a growing concern among the faculty and administration. Three of the most discussed questions circulating are:

1) Should OR 100 (3:3:0) College Success Seminar be changed to OR 110 and upgraded to a college level course?

2) Should OR 101 (1:1:0) College 101 or another orientation course be made an institutional requirement for all or part of the entering freshman class?

3) Should the institution institute a required exit course for all or part of the student body?

Purpose of this Survey

This survey was conducted to provide information requested specifically by the Curriculum Committee concerning the transferability of our various orientation courses. This inquiry resulted from a proposal to upgrade OR 100 to a college level course. The college offers four courses in this area generally taught by the student services staff.

OR 100 College Success Seminar (3 credits) - Offered initially by the EOF Department as a program requirement, this is the most popular and most frequently offered of all the OR courses. Eight to ten sections carry each academic year and many are over enrolled. It is open to all students but tends to by dominated by first semester EOF, Student

Support Services, or other basic or developmental level students.
OR 101 College 101 (1 credit) - Viewed as the course that would be the institutional orientation requirement should this action be brought about. Although two to three sections are on the schedule each semester, few ever carry due to insufficient enrollments.
OR 102 Career Development (3 credits) - This course is taken by students in developmental studies who need to attend full-time, and is also recommended to those who have yet to designate a major.
OR 103 Learning Strategies (3 Credits) - Although this course has yet to be included in the college catalog, it is the designated orientation course for students within Project Assist, and enrollment is limited to that (learning disabled) student population. The course has carried each semester for a number of years.

Sampling and Data Gathering Procedures

The Higher Education Directory (1990) was used to identify all colleges and universities, both two- and four-year in New Jersey, Delaware and Pennsylvania. Two hundred and eighty-eight (288) institutions were mailed the survey form with a cover letter explaining its purpose. The surveys were mailed in July 1994, and those that were returned were received by mid October. There was no follow-up done. Of the 288 mailed surveys, nine were returned by colleges that had either closed or moved. Eighty-six completed surveys were returned for a response rate of 30 percent.

The returned surveys contained many omissions. In the tables that were constructed to display the results, omissions were overlooked and percentages were calculated based on the number of responses to each individual item. Of the 86 returned surveys, 21 were from two-year

colleges and 65 represented four-year institutions. Thirty public and 56 private institutions responded (see Table 2).

The survey instrument was developed by the student services administrative members and was expanded to incorporate information beyond the transfer issues requested by the Curriculum Committee (see Appendix I). It was felt that additional information would be useful for future planning and decision making regarding these four courses.

Summary of Responses

OR 100 is the only "pre college" of the four orientation courses (designated by its 100 course number), but it transfers at greater proportions than its three counterparts. Table I contains the information requested by the Curriculum Committee. At the time, OR 100 was the topic of discussion concerning whether the course number should be upgraded. It appears that 60 percent of all responding institutions will not accept OR 100 in transfer, however, 33 percent do award transfer credit for the course. If you compare Tables 3 and 4 with Table 1, you will see that the transfer ratios of these orientation courses with two- and four-year colleges is about the same. Generally, OR 100 will transfer as a free elective about one third of the time.

About 37 percent of the institutions contained herein have a Freshman Seminar or equivalent orientation course required of incoming freshman students (see Table 2). Seventy-six percent of the time this requirement is offered for credit. Although colleges vary in the amount of credit they award for orientation courses, 43 percent of the time it is a one-credit course. Just 20 percent of the time is this course offered for three credits.

The course is taught by just about everyone; faculty, counselors and administrators all appear to have a hand in the delivery of

orientation courses, but it is most frequently taught by the instructional faculty. These courses are most often scheduled within a normal semester. Only 21 percent of the time are the courses condensed into the first part of a semester.

The intent of this survey was to provide information, not to make recommendations. The information provided here should add considerable light onto questions 1 and 2 posed in the introduction.

Table 1

Responses from 2-year and 4-year Colleges Combined on Transferability of Orientation Courses

This course would most likely:	OR 100 n	OR 100 %	OR 101 n	OR 101 %	OR 102 n	OR 102 %	OR 103 n	OR 103 %
Be accepted for transfer credit as a free elective toward the Bachelors.	27	33	23	28	24	30	18	23
Be accepted, but not applied toward graduation requirements.	5	6	6	7	5	6	4	5
Be accepted only if the student transferred with an Associates Degree.	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Not applied for transfer credit.	50	60	53	64	51	63	57	71
Total responses/percent	83	100	83	100	81	100	80	100

Table 2

Cumulative Responses to Various Questions on Survey

---

1. Is Freshman Seminar, or equivalent orientation course, a requirement at your institution?
   yes - 31 (37%) no - 53 (63%)

2. What department does the course fall under at your college?

Student Services	18	(26%)
Social/Behavioral Science	4	(6%)
decentralized	10	(15%)
not applicable	15	(22%)
other	21	(39%)

3. Who teaches Freshman Seminar/Orientation courses at your college?

psychology faculty	1	(1%)
all faculty	26	(36%)
counselors	15	(21%)
administrators	15	(21%)
all of the above	15	(21%)

4. Is your Freshman Seminar/Orientation offered as a (check all that apply):

one-credit course	26	(43%)
two-credit course	6	(10%)
three-credit course	12	(20%)
non-credit course	15	(24%)
(four-credit course)	2	(3%)

5. Is the course offering a semester-long course or is it condensed into the beginning of the semester?

normal course offering	42	(79%)
condensed offering	11	(21%)

6. Is your institution a public or private, two-year or four-year college?

	two-year	four-year	totals
public	13	17	30
private	8	48	56
totals	21	65	**86**

Table 3

Responses from 4-year Colleges on
Transferability of Orientation Courses

This course would most likely:	OR 100 n	%	OR 101 n	%	OR 102 n	%	OR 103 n	%
Be accepted for transfer credit as a free elective toward the Bachelors.	21	33	17	27	16	27	12	20
Be accepted, but not applied toward graduation requirements.	3	5	3	5	3	5	2	3
Be accepted only if the student transferred with an Associates Degree.	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Not applied for transfer credit.	38	60	41	66	40	66	44	75
Total responses	63	100	62	100	60	100	59	100

Table 4

Responses from 2-year Colleges on
Transferability of Orientation Courses

This course would most likely:	OR 100 n	%	OR 101 n	%	OR 102 n	%	OR 103 n	%
Be accepted for transfer credit as a free elective toward the Bachelors.	6	30	6	30	8	38	6	29
Be accepted, but not applied toward graduation requirements.	2	10	3	10	2	10	2	10
Be accepted only if the student transferred with an Associates Degree.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Not applied for transfer credit.	12	60	12	60	11	52	13	62
Total responses	20	100	21	100	21	100	21	100

Table 5

Colleges and Universities that Participated in the Survey

Two-Year Colleges:

- Delaware Technical & Community College
- Keystone Junior College
- Assumption College for Sisters
- Ocean County College
- Clarion University
- Berkeley College
- Mercer County College
- Sussex County Community College
- Thaddeus Stevens State School of Technology
- Penn College
- Johnson Technical Institute
- Welder Training & Testing Institute
- Pierce College
- Delaware County Community College
- Pittsburgh Institute of Mortuary Science
- Bergen Community College
- Harrisburg Area Community College
- Northampton Community College
- Camden County College
- Lackawanna Junior College
- Manor Junior College

Four-Year Colleges & Universities:

- University of Pennsylvania
- Lehigh University
- Robert Morris College
- Seton Hill College
- University College - Rutgers New Brunswick
- Delaware Valley College
- Lafayette College
- Temple University
- Seton Hall University
- Ramapo College of New Jersey
- Saint Peter's College
- East Stroudsburg University
- Millersville University
- College Saint Elizabeth
- Alvernia College
- Beaver College
- Penn State Schuylkll Campus
- Rutgers University - Camden
- University of Pittsburg/Bradford
- Wilmington College
- University of Delaware
- Marywood College
- St. Vincent College
- University of Pittsburg/Greensburg Campus
- Allentown College of St. Francis de Salis
- Philadelphia College of Textiles & Science
- Lancaster Bible College
- Holy Family College
- Moore College of Art & Design
- Chestnut Hill College

Penn State
Richard Stockton College of New Jersey
Carnegie Mellon University
Carlow College
Widener University
LaRoche College
University of Pittsburgh
Thomas Jefferson University
Gwynedd-Mercy College
Gratz College
Geneva College
Wilkes University
Fairleigh Dickinson University
Susquehana University
Messiah College
Rutgers College of Pharmacy
Alleghney College
Philadelphia College of Bible
Ursinus College
Bucknell University
Mercyhurst College
Goldey-Beacom College
Morivain College
LaSalle University
Albright College
Juniata College
Rutgers University
Point Park College
Georgian Court College
Rowan College of New Jersey
Rider University
King's College
Lycoming College

Note: These institutions are listed in no particular order. Not all colleges that participated are listed since it was optional to identify themselves.

APPENDIX I

CUMBERLAND COUNTY COLLEGE

Orientation Course Survey

This course would most likely:	OR 100 College Success Seminar 3 Credits	OR 101 College 101 1 Credit	OR 102 Career Development 3 Credits	OR 103 Learning Strategies 3 Credits
1. Be accepted for transfer credit as a free elective toward the bachelors.				
2. Be accepted, but not applied toward graduation requirements.				
3. Be accepted only if the student had transferred with an associate degree.				
4. Not be accepted for transfer credit.				

(Check one box in each column)

5. Is Freshman Seminar, or equivalent orientation course, a requirement at your institution? Yes_____ No_____

6. What department does the course fall under at your college?
   Student Services _____
   Social/Behavioral Sciences _____
   Decentralized within various departments _____
   Not Applicable_____
   Other:_____

7. Who teaches Freshman Seminar/Orientation courses at your college?
   Psychology Faculty _____
   All Faculty _____
   Counselors _____
   Administrators _____
   All of the above _____

8. Is your Freshman Seminar/Orientation course offered as a (check all that apply):
   One-credit Course _____
   Two-credit Course _____
   Three-credit Course _____
   Non-credit Course _____

(OVER)

9. Is the course offering a semester-long course or is it condensed into the beginning of the semester?
Normal Course Offering _____
Condensed Offering _____

10. Comments:_____

_____

_____

11. Name of College:_____

12. Is your institution a two-year _____ or four-year _____ college? (Check one.)

13. Is your institution public _____ or private _____? (Check one.)

14. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey sent to you when they are compiled? Yes_____ No_____ If "Yes," please provide your name and mailing address here:

Name:_____

Institution:_____

Address:_____

_____

If you have conducted any institutional reports on the effects of your orientation course offerings on students' success, a copy would be appreciated.

Thank you for your cooperation and assistance. Please return this form in the self-addressed, postage-paid return envelope.

Cumberland County College - Orientation Courses

OR 100 (3 credits) College Success Seminar prepares students to utilize academic survival skills, to practice goal setting, and to develop achievement thinking and behavior which increase their chances of being successful in college. Upon successful completion of this course the student should be able to: understand and explain the many concepts and issues that contribute to greater self-awareness; understand and utilize effective listening and communication skills; identify his/her own self-motivations, attitudes, feelings, and belief; understand the decision making process and how to use cognitive processing; and establish short and long range career and personal goals.

OR 101 (1 credit) College 101 provides incoming students the opportunity to acquire academic survival skills and to develop critical thinking skills for success in college. Upon successful completion of this course, the student should be able to: adopt active learning strategies enhancing student's ability to organize, clarify, and be successful in meeting academic and personal demands; understand and utilize catalog information about college policies, academic information, student services, and programs of study; develop skills to utilize the library effectively; understand the importance of relationships in having a satisfying college experience; and recognize the importance of physical and mental health including nutrition, exercise, relaxation and stress management toward personal well-being.

OR 102 (3 credits) Career Development is designed to provide students with an awareness of career issues, personal values, objectives and an informative realistic approach to obtaining work. Upon successful completion of this course, the student should be able to: investigate salary, educational requirements and outlook for jobs and careers in the American labor market; approach businesses for positions with the State and Federal employment; apply for positions with the State and Federal Government Civil Service Administrations; construct chronological and functional resumes and cover letters; conduct mature and successful employment interviews; more fully clarify their personal career goals; employ positive work attitudes and job keeping skills.

OR 103 (3 credits) Learning Strategies is designed to provide students with the skills needed to increase their chances of having a successful college experience. Upon successful completion of this course, the student should be able to: identify his/her own strengths and limitations in terms of abilities, learning style, personality, and specific learning disabilities; consider these factors in planning an academic program and selecting a realistic career; and demonstrate knowledge of appropriate academic adjustments and how to access them. The learning strategies, study skills and techniques of compensation presented are adapted to the specific need of students who have learning disabilities.

Cumberland county college

P.O. BOX 517, VINELAND, NEW JERSEY 08360-0517 • 609/691-8600

August 1, 1994

ATTENTION: TRANSFER/ADMISSIONS OFFICE

Dear Colleague:

Our institution is currently examining its orientation course offerings. One of the issues we are investigating is the transferability of these college courses to other two- and four-year institutions.

Would you please examine these courses identified on the back of this page and, to the best of your ability, answer the questions on the enclosed survey form. Simply place a check in one box for each column under the four courses identified and answer the questions posed. Return the completed form by as soon as possible in the enclosed, self-addressed, postage-paid envelope. If you are not the most appropriate individual to complete this form, please forward it to that person whom you think could answer the questions more accurately.

If you would like to receive a copy of this completed survey, check the appropriate line and provide your institutional address on item 14 of the last page.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Steven M. Stolar, Ed.D.
Director of Advisement

SMS:pjs
Enclosure